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## Teacher Immediacy

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# The Perception of Immediacy and its Effects on Motivation and Learning

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## Immediate Behaviors

Communicate availability, attentiveness, and social accessibility and produce interpersonal closeness while reducing psychological distance

## Defining Terms

- People are drawn towards persons they like, evaluate highly and prefer
- Behaviors that convey a message of confidence and comfortability are known as **Immediate Behaviors**
- An instructor engaging in immediate behaviors is acting with **Teacher Immediacy**
- Teacher Immediacy is believed to have profound influence on **Student Motivation** and **Student Learning**
- There are two types of immediacy: **Verbal Immediacy** and **Nonverbal Immediacy**
- The ranges of immediate behaviors fall under the following categories: **Haptics, Oculesics, Kinesics, Chronemics, Proxemics, Olfactics, Tone, Volume, Diction, and Syntax**

## Theoretical Framework

- **Efficiency** in the classroom increases from two main sources: improvements in student-teacher communications and reduction in downtime
- Immediate behavior by definition increases interpersonal closeness between student and teacher which is believed to increase efficiency in **student-teacher interactions**
- Improvements in student motivation are believed to improve student **participation** and reduce student **misbehavior** within the classroom
- **Verbal immediacy** consists of positive language, proper use of names, proper pacing, and exclusion of incoherent intrusions
- **Nonverbal Immediacy** consists of unobtrusive hand gestures, proper body language and placement, eye contact, and proximity. Nonverbal immediacy is believed to have more effect than Verbal immediacy

## Findings

- **Motivation** improvements tend to be strongly correlated to students' perceptions of immediacy
- **Student Learning** benefits tend to be strongly correlated with reported perceptions of immediacy
- **Student Misbehavior** within a classroom is often indicated by misbehavior outside of a classroom or in other classes and tends to not be readily correlated with immediate instructor behavior.
- **Instructor Misbehavior** has been shown to negate beneficial effects of proper immediate behavior.
- Certain immediate behaviors can become misbehaviors depending on the cultural characteristics of students

## Implications

- The relationship between immediate behaviors and students is currently incomplete
- Educators stand to gain a lot of useful information simply through awareness and implementation of proper and improper instructor misbehaviors
- Awareness of types of immediate behaviors is often enough to make substantial improvements to immediate behaviors within the classroom.

## Looking Forward

- Immediacy has profound effects on motivation and learning, the focus must now turn to the types of immediate behavior that are most helpful and the misbehaviors that are most detrimental
- In order to increase awareness and understanding of immediacy, it is imperative that more teacher action research focus upon the topic
- I will delve deeper into immediacy next fall during student teaching